



**BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND**

**AB 5901
July 6, 2021
Consent Agenda**

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 5901: Community-Based Counseling Staffing Appropriation	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Appropriate funding for limited-term staffing for the Community-Based Counseling Program.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution

DEPARTMENT:	Youth and Family Services
STAFF:	Ali Spietz, Chief of Administration Tambi Cork, YFS Administrator
COUNCIL LIAISON:	n/a
EXHIBITS:	n/a
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	n/a

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ 60,000
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$ 0
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$ 60,000

SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda bill is to seek a one-time \$60,000 appropriation to temporarily increase staffing through the end of fiscal year 2021 for the Community-Based Counseling Program in the Youth & Family Services department due to an unanticipated staff leave.

BACKGROUND

The mental health professionals in the Community-Based Counseling Program provide individual, couple, and family counseling for Mercer Island residents with behavioral health challenges. Counseling staff work with residents across the lifespan to deal with a wide range of issues including:

- Child development, teens, transitions to adulthood
- Family conflict, parenting skills
- Relationship issues, divorce, co-parenting
- Abuse, neglect, trauma
- Depression, anxiety
- Social-emotional skills (including for coping with the Pandemic)
- Grief and loss

APPROPRIATION REQUEST

In 2020, the community-based counseling program was reduced from 1.9 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees made up of three individuals to 1.1 FTE (two employees) due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Currently, one of the two employees is on indefinite leave. There is no capacity to transfer their caseload and clients to other staff. In addition, there are eleven community members on the wait list for individual, couple, and family counseling services, with an estimated wait time of six weeks for counseling services at YFS.

To help with current clientele and to level-off and reduce the wait list, staff is seeking an appropriation of up to \$60,000 from the 2020 General Fund year-end balance to hire a 1.0 limited-term equivalent (LTE) Community-Based Counselor through December 31, 2021. The position will provide immediate temporary support. Staff will reassess staffing resources for the Community-Based Counseling Program in the Youth & Family Services department in the fall of 2021.

RECOMMENDATION

Appropriate up to \$60,000 from 2020 General Fund year-end balance to hire a 1.0 LTE Community-Based Counselor through December 31, 2021.